The Expulsions from the Ontario New Democratic Party – the Case for the Defence; A Report of a Meeting addressed by Five of the Expelled Youth
(Pamphlet, May 1963)

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1963

The Expulsions from the Ontario New Democratic Party

The Case for the Defense

A Report of a Meeting Addressed by Five of The Expelled Youth

THE SPEAKERS TO THE MEETING at the
Lansdowne Assembly Hall,
May 2, 1963

Dick Fidler

Active in the NDP movement before its founding; delegate to both party and youth conventions; member of the provincial NDP council last year; former third vice-president of York East NDP constituency; active in U. of Toronto campus club.

Allan Engler

Education director of the Metro NDY council; formerly a vice-president of the Ontario NDY; assistant director of Davenport constituency election campaign; member of the CCF-NDP for 9 years; former leader of the University of Saskatchewan CCF Club, largest CCF university club in Canada.

Jim Onyschuk

President of West Toronto NDY club, delegate to Metro Council and 1963 provincial youth convention.

John Wilson

Vice-president of Metro Council of NDY; executive member of Parkdale constituency NDP; youth delegate to the last provincial and the founding federal convention; a member of the CCF-NDP since 1953.

Toni Foster

Delegate to the founding conventions of the NDP and NDY, both federal and provincial; first vice-president of the Ontario NDY; editor of the Metro NDY Council newsletter, FORWARD.

INTRODUCTION

Less than a month has passed since the ten young New Democrats received their notices of expulsion, and already the purge is being extended. In a letter dated April 25th, and sent to all the New Democratic Youth clubs in Ontario, Provincial Youth Secretary Sharon Peirson not only lists the names of the original ten who are henceforth not allowed "to engage in political activities or attend NDY functions and activities within the Province of Ontario", but also adds three more --the names of persons who have not even been formally notified of their expulsions! And still not content with this arbitrary action, the Ontario Youth Executive sees fit to include the names of eleven youth expelled recently from the British Columbia section of the New Democratic Youth. And George Cadbury, president of the Ontario NDP, has declared publicly that more expulsions (of unnamed individuals) are in the offing. Thus it is now obvious that there is more at stake here than simply the particular cases of the original ten --an all-out attack has been launched by the leadership, and where it will end, no one can be sure.

The expelled youth have been charged with "membership in another political party, specifically the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA)". No evidence has been presented to show that such a group exists, or that, if it does exist, it is a "party"! Information on the character of this supposed group can only be gleaned from the rumours which are presently circulating around the NDP.

Even on the basis of these rumours, it is absurd to characterize the said "youth alliance" as a political party. At most, this "YSA" could only be said to be a caucus within the NDP. It is rumoured that this group is a membership organization, its adherents paying dues to an executive office. If so, this simply places it on a par with

organizations such as the newly-formed Fabian Society which exists as a formalized grouping within the party, and to which members are recruited and dues paid.

There is said to be evidence that members of this "YSA" assume pseudonyms in their records. If these rumours are true, in view of the hysteria being stirred up around this supposed organization, this would seem to have been a logical action.

There is a rumour going the rounds that a former member of the Conservative Party claims to have been a member of this "alliance", and that it is his "testimony" that is the basis of these charges and the expulsions by the provincial executive. Are we to accept the word of an individual who by his own admission was active in what is being labelled as a "subversive"and "treacherous" group? An individual who, it is said, was once an organizer for the Tories, and who is now not even a member of the New Democratic Party? Surely this person's word is worth nothing in the light of his own record. If he exists (and of course, we can go only on rumour), he is an informer of the most reprehensible type, not to be taken seriously by anyone of honest and discerning character.

Why do the expelled youth refuse to answer the question of whether or not they are members of this "Young Socialist Alliance"? The provincial council has already declared that this supposed group is a "party" illegal within the NDP. Therefore the question of whether it is or is not a party has at this time been removed from the realm of debate. To admit membership is to put one's head under the executioner's axe.

To deny membership is to beg off the witch hunters, to give up the fight against the intimidation and persecution of minority views. To deny membership is to open the door for them to declare illegal (as a "party") any caucus which they wish, which in turn would lead to the use of informers, with all the mutual suspicion and the internecine atmosphere which that involves.

The only constitutional grounds for expulsion

from the NDP are "membership in or support of another political party." It is for this reason that the executive has raised the phoney issue of a "party", in this case the "Young Socialist Alliance". It is correctly pointed out in the speeches which follow that the real reason why these young people are being hounded out of the party is that they hold views which differ from those of the executive of the NDP. In essence, it is not only those views which are being attacked, but the very right to hold and express minority opinions within the party.

The "leaders"of the NDP are putting on a striptease show with the rags of elementary party democracy. This is why the expulsions can be termed a "witch hunt" and that is why every member of the New Democratic Party must oppose the expulsions, and demand the reinstatement of the youth.

TONI FOSTER

Some people may say that the expulsions are an internal party matter, that they should not be brought outside the party. But is not the NDP an open party? Don't the people in Canada want to know what its platform is? Haven't the leaders of the NDP said that they would publish the party's sources of financial donations so that people could see who contributes to this party? Why is something like expulsions, the purging of ten young people from the party; why is this to be kept inside the party? Does this not affect the attitude of people toward the NDP? Are people not going to wonder about democracy, and wonder why these youth have been expelled?

We reject the argument that by holding this meeting we are harming the NDP. On the contrary, we are fighting for more democracy within the NDP, the right of minorities to express their opinions and we want unity in the party -- unity of the working people and the farmers with all their divergent points of view. At a time when we have just suffered an electoral defeat, shouldn't the leadership by analyzing what happened and talking to

the membership, inviting discussion in the constituencies on why we did so badly in the elections? No! What do they do? They launch a purge of the people who are critical of the leadership's policy.

Some have said that we are immature young people who have no vested interest in the party. They also have the idea that we have just come along recently to infiltrate the party to present an ideology that is alien to the NDP. Let me point to two of the speakers here. John Wilson has been in the CCF-NDP for ten years and has held many executive positions. Al Engler was the leader of the largest university CCF club in Canada and has been in the party for nine years. We are not Johnny-come-latelies by any means. Most of the rest of us were in the New Party clubs, where we helped found the NDP. When I came in I was told that this was a socialist party, based on the trade unions. I said, "Great, I'm all for that," and ever since that day I have worked for the party.

JOHN WILSON

Brothers and sisters, members and friends of the NDP: I think our chairman here has outlined the importance of the question confronting the people attending this meeting tonight. To put it in a brief capsule, I was expelled from the party with no trial, no charges, and with none of the evidence being presented which the provincial executive claims it has. In fact I did not know the charges I faced until I appeared for my appeal. Now that leaves us with the question: regardless of the merits of the people concerned, the expulsions have been carried out in the most high-handed and undemocratic manner.

I might say that the first time I learned that anything like this was about to happen was four months after I had put in my application for renewal of membership. I submitted this prior to the October provincial convention of the NDP in Ontario, and it was sent in by the Parkdale organizer.

Shortly after the convention I phoned him to ask why I had not received a new card. He said he didn't know. He had handed in all the memberships and thought there must have been some kind of administrative slip-up. He phoned the provincial office several times. My membership had not come through and he still had not heard anything about it. I contacted the person at the provincial office who looks after memberships twice about the matter and was told nothing outside of the fact that that person did not know what had happened to the membership.

So finally I went down to see the provincial secretary and he told me that my membership was being held up. I must report that it was held up for four months; it was held up from the October convention until January, before I found out that it was being held up at all.

During these four months my constituency organization, in which I was an executive member, was not informed that my membership was being held up, nor was the Metro New Democratic Youth Council of which I was Vice President, nor my own youth group, the West Toronto NDY.

Now why, if the provincial executive was really concerned with what my role had been, of what my activities had been, of how I conducted myself, whether I had violated the constitution or the program of the party, now why did they not go to these people and these organizations? Are they not the people who know me best, who know what I have done in the party; are they not the people best qualified to say what kind of worker I am for the party; did they have any criticisms of me? Well I never heard any criticisms in the Metro Youth Council. Some people didn't agree with some of the ideas I expressed, but they certainly didn't have any quarrel with me being in the organization. I certainly don't think the Parkdale club took that attitude even after they knew my membership had been refused. I was a district organizer in that area during the last federal election, in an area that covered about ten polls. So presumably they had some confidence in me, for they not only gave

me positions like that but elected me to their executive. Now when I saw Mr. Bury, who is the Provincial Secretary of the party, I asked him why my membership was being held up. He said that some people -- now mark the words for this is almost exactly what he said to me -- had suggested that I had "undesirable associations". He didn't know what the concrete charges were;he didn't tell me what they were or why I hadn't been even informed. So I said to him at that time: "I want a concrete charge laid against me. It says in the constitution that the only grounds for expulsion from the party is that you are a member or supporter of another political party; not merely that you have some kind of 'associations' which someone considers to be undesirable."

Shortly thereafter I got a letter. The reason given in the letter for the refusal of my membership was, "activities in support of another political party." That's all. Nothing else. It didn't say which party, or what activities. This occurred after the provincial executive meeting which decided to turn down my membership had taken place. I previously requested of the provincial secretary that I be allowed to attend this meeting -- since after all, in essence I was being placed on trial at that meeting. I was not permitted to attend this meeting, nor was I given any reason why I could not attend -- despite the fact that this was where the decision was being taken. After I received this letter, informing me that my membership had been turned down, without specific charges or evidence to support them, I wrote a registered letter to Mr. Bury asking him to reply to the following questions. First I want concrete charges laid. I wanted to know what I was alleged to be a member of, the name of the so-called party and the evidence in support of the charge. I didn't even receive a reply to that letter.

I was not informed of the date of my appeal. I had to phone the provincial secretary three days before the provincial council meeting of April 20-21 in order to get an appeal at all. The executive of Parkdale riding also wrote to the provincial

Secretary and asked him exactly what the charges were and why I was being expelled. They also have not received a reply to their letter.

I was told by Mr. Bury that the following procedure would take place. I was told I would be allowed to make a statement to the council delegates; that I would thereafter be dismissed and they would discuss the question. I wasn't even going to be allowed to sit in on the discussion as to whether my expulsion would be upheld or turned down.

I was secondly informed by George Cadbury, who was chairing the meeting and who is president of the Ontario Party, that they had passed a motion on the previous day that some kind of organization called the "Young Socialist Alliance" had been defined by the provincial executive as a political party. He asked me if I was a member of it. I asked him, "Are you charging me with being a member of it?" He said, "Yes, we are charging you with being a member of this Young Socialist Alliance." I said that before I answer that question I wanted to know what the "Young Socialist Alliance" is supposed to be, what constitutes membership in that organization and in what way that organization, if in fact it exists, is a political party. He did not answer that question.

So you see, several months after I received information of my expulsion, and only the day before my appeal, they passed the law by which they say I was expelled. What kind of a way is that for a democratic organization to conduct itself? What are people who are not in the NDP going to think of such a procedure? What are they going to think of the title "New Democratic Party"?

At the conclusion of the part of the appeal which I was permitted to attend, I said I considered it the responsibility of the provincial executive first to produce the evidence and to produce witnesses as evidence. I said that after ten years in the movement when you come down to an appeal, when you are being expelled, it wasn't too much to ask that the charges be presented and the evidence be presented, so that you can make a proper appeal.

I said that I did not come down to submit to an inquisition, and I hoped other people did not have to submit to inquisitions either. And as far as I was concerned, I considered that appeal, and I think most of you in the audience will consider that kind of appeal a complete farce and a mockery, and not an appeal at all. It is, in my opinion, a complete violation of elementary democratic rights which should be accorded to every member of the party regardless of their views and regardless of their position in the party.

JIM ONYSCHUK

We are all being asked questions today. Are you, or are you not a member of the Young Socialist Alliance? Answer yes or no. What does this mean?

On April 19th, I received a letter from James Bury, provincial secretary. It read: "Dear Mr. Onyschuk. Your membership in the New Democratic Party has been reviewed by the Provincial Executive. The Executive has instructed me to inform you that in view of your membership in and support of another political party, namely the Young Socialist Alliance, you have forfeited your right to membership in the New Democratic Party".

On April 20th, an interesting phenomenon occured. The provincial executive passed a resolution that "The Young Socialist Alliance" is a political party. Two days after I had been expelled. It seems rather amusing. It would have been more amusing, if the resolution had not been passed. Then where would they have been? (Laughter) In other words, I was judged and condemned two days before the law was passed.

It is well known to us that in courts of law, that evidence is generally presented, evidence trying to prove you guilty of a certain charge. No evidence was presented in my case, or in any other. We were found guilty, a law was passed, and we were judged by the same people who found us guilty two days before. No avenues were open to us. We

tried to get an article into the New Democrat; our letter has received no answer.

How did all this start? It started with rumours. Approximately six or seven months ago, we heard rumours that we were going to be expelled by January 1st. January 1st came around, and we weren't expelled. The rumours continued. There was a vicious whisper campaign going on behind our backs. Why did they have to whisper behind our backs? Did they fear an answer from us? Is that what they feared?

I also heard a rumour, and I'm going to comment on it. The rumour is that a certain person was in this "Young Socialist Alliance" and that this person has pointed out all of us here and the others that are being expelled as being present at a "Young Socialist Alliance" meeting. If this person is the one they say he is, he is now no longer even a member of the NDP. He went in, and he left. And if he is the person they say he is, he was a former president of a Young Conservative youth group. Now this person's word is being accepted by the executive against Al's and John's, who have been working in the party nine and ten years, and who have helped to build this party. This person has never appeared as a witness at any time to be questioned by the accused and rumour has it that he refuses to do so. I wonder why? So you can see the whole way this is going, it is strictly on hearsay. The word of one person. Is he a person whom we can trust?

This is a witch hunt. Witch hunts can be characterized as something based on hearsay, and it is on this hearsay that people are condemned or thrown out or murdered or whatever you want. This is what a witch hunt is. This is the character it has assumed here.

The executive has also refused to say what this "Young Socialist Alliance" is. If they could define it and show in what ways we have been proving ourselves members of the "YSA", it would make things much easier for them. Again, they have been making things hard for themselves. They call the "Young Socialist Alliance" an "opponent political

party". An opponent political party! I have never heard of it having run candidates either against the NDP or any other political party. I have never heard of this party! Has anyone here?

What tops matters off, is that one of the persons who is being expelled is sixteen years old. Now this person is in his formative years, and is developing ideas -- why do they regard this person as such a serious enemy? Do they not know that if they expel this person, they can affect his future? Do they not know the seriousness of the charge? The RCMP would just love to know his name. Do they not know that they can black-ball this person from a job? This person, I know him personally, has built up his club from scratch to the third largest youth club in the New Democratic Youth. Now how is this hurting the New Democratic Party?

Al Engler had an interesting discussion with Mr. Brewin. He's quite a noted lawyer. What shocks me, and what reveals to me the character of these purges, and shows the witch hunt character, is that when Al asked him what evidence you have, he said, "We don't have to produce any evidence!" A lawyer saying that we don't have to produce any evidence. What does this mean?

One of the rumours circulated here & there against the Young Socialist Alliance is that it is a totalitarian organization. Totalitarian! Well, I don't consider myself totalitarian, and I'm accused of being in this group. What are they trying to do, fight fire with fire? Fight what they think totalitarianism is with totalitarianism? Maybe they should be in the "Young Socialist Alliance", I don't know. (Laughter) You draw your own conclusions.

I'm also accused, by being in this "Young Socialist Alliance", as advocating an alien philosophy, advocating that a bloody revolution take place. I've never advocated this. They know that.

I can classify myself as an originalist. I believe in the original constitution of the CCF -- the Regina Manifesto -- I can call myself an originalist. Is that alien?*

So what does all this mean? You see that with

rumours, charges, without evidence, and with statements to the effect that we don't have to present evidence, this all means a witch hunt. This is McCarthyism.

Why do I refuse to answer the question, "Are you or are you not a member of the 'Young Socialist Alliance'?" Well, I would like to quote from one of the clearest thinkers and most brilliant minds of our time, and that is Albert Einstein. The following is his reply to a request from a young scientist for a statement on whether or not a person should testify before a McCarthyite security committee. The scientist had refused to testify and had been threatened with the loss of his job. The standard query at such committees was, "Are you or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?" -- already condemned illegal by the committee as a subversive organization. Here is the reply. "Every intellectual who is called before one of these committees ought to refuse to testify, i.e.,he must be prepared for jail and economic ruin, in short, for the sacrifice of his personal welfare in the interest of the cultural welfare of his country. This refusal to testify must be based on the assertion that it is shameful for a blameless citizen to submit to such an inquisition and that this kind of inquisition violates the spirit of the constitution...If enough people are ready to take this brave step they will be successful. If not, the intellectuals of this country deserve nothing better than the slavery which is intended for them." (McCarthy called Einstein "an enemy of America"! Time, 22/6/53) I too refuse to answer the question, on the basis of its McCarthyite character.

The executive has placed the onus on the people who they accuse of being guilty to prove themselves innocent. "We passed a law, rumour says that you're guilty, you're guilty!" Well, you see, this is the old primitive law that you are guilty until proven innocent.

The adage has been mentioned, "Have you stopped beating your wife yet?" Answer yes or no. How can you answer such a question? You can't say "yes"

to this because you won't be allowed to say why you should be in the New Democratic Party at all. It's already proscribed. And if you say "no", one of the things you are doing, is that you're answering a witch hunt question, you are bowing down to this witch hunt, rather than fighting it. This is one of the things you are doing, and also you're stating indirectly that you say that there is a "Young Socialist Alliance". So you can't answer that question.

ALLAN ENGLER

One point which the previous speakers have not yet brought out is that the executive, aside from not presenting evidence to the people being expelled, has presented no evidence to substantiate these charges to the provincial council either, the body which is to hear the appeals. It is very difficult to judge an appeal and weigh the facts both for and against if you don't have the facts both for and against.

By not presenting evidence they have put all of us in the position of being guilty until <u>we</u> prove ourselves innocent. Even supposing that we were guilty of all their charges, even supposing this; anyone who is a principled member of the New Democratic Party, anyone who is a principled socialist must oppose the way these expulsions have been carried out. If we do not oppose these expulsions, we are giving the executive the right in the future to expel anyone. After he is expelled, the person will have to prove why he should <u>not</u> be expelled. The provincial executive will have to do nothing else. They will just say you are expelled; now you prove why you oughn't be. They could say that you are a Martian, and Martians are illegal in the New Democratic Party, and we're not even telling you how we define Martians. Now prove to us that you're not a Martian. (Laughter and applause)

But why is all this being done? There must be an explanation for it. Well, there is in fact an

explanation for the expulsions. Every one of the expelled members holds a minority position in the Ontario New Democratic Party. Every one of the expelled is against NATO; every one of the expelled is pro-nationalization; and every one of the expelled is pro-Cuba. Whether you agree with us or not, I think everyone here would say that we have a right to express our opinions so long as we do it <u>within</u> the New Democratic Party. We have a right to change, or attempt to change the position of the party to our views, so long as we abide by the constitution. And we have abided by the constitution much more strictly than the people who are expelling us. (Applause)

I'd like to give a general history of the people who are being expelled. At the October convention --the First Annual Convention of the New Democratic Youth, a group of us caucused, twenty-five or thirty people. We caucused so that we could coordinate our efforts to pass a resolution in opposition to NATO, and to pass a resolution favoring nationalization of industries that had the power to sabotage our economic plans. The NATO resolution was defeated by three or four votes. The resolution on nationalization was passed almost unanimously.

Everyone who played a prominent role in this left caucus has been expelled. Most of the people prominent in this caucus are in fact here on the platform. John Wilson presented the minority's position. Toni Foster and I were representatives of the minority on the last provincial executive. Dick Fidler argued very strongly for the minority position from the floor. John Riddell gave a very moving anti-NATO speech which almost carried the vote -- he too has been expelled.

Later at the provincial adult convention, during the discussion of the preamble to the program, a resolution opposing the form of the preamble as presented by the provincial executive was moved -- I'm not sure whether it was Dick or John -- one or the other, but both argues strongly for a socialist preamble rather than the "consumers" preamble that we now have. Both have been expelled.

Earlier I mentioned that we are being expelled for supporting Cuba. There are two people in the NDP in Ontario who wrote for the pamphlet Four Canadians Who Saw Cuba, John Glenn and Dick Fidler. Both of them have been expelled. There is another NDY'er from Ontario who has been to Cuba, and that is Toni Foster. She has also been expelled. In other words, all the New Democratic Youth members in Ontario who have visited Cuba have been expelled.

The expelled have also taken opposition to nuclear weapons for Canada very seriously. A demonstration was held in front of the City Hall some days before Christmas in which many members of the New Democratic Youth were arrested. With I think one exception, every one of the arrested NDY'ers have been expelled. (From audience: "Who defended you in court?") Andy Brewin, and he did a very fine job, I must say; although he argued on the basis of evidence there. (Laughter and applause)

There are other little things which surprise you. For instance, Ellen Adams, who is secretary to Donald MacDonald, the provincial leader, at the last provincial council meeting at which the expulsions were being discussed, denounced some of the people who were being expelled, particularly me, for holding a demonstration in the name of the New Democratic Youth, against Woolworth's. We picketed Woolworth's because it segregates its stores in southern United States. We were under the impression that opposition to segregation, that opposition tc human degredation was such a simple and elementary thing, that nobody could oppose picketing Woolworth's. The fact that the provincial executive members opposed the demonstration, of course does not mean they favor segregation. It can only mean that they are opposed to the youth expressing themselves at all.

Another odd charge was made by George Cadbury, the provincial president, when he told the press we were being expelled for supporting Ross Dowson for mayor. Now what were the choices in the Toronto municipal elections? Were we to give up our responsibility as citizens and not go to the polls

at all, or were we supposed to vote for either Summerville or Phillips, both of whom are Tories, members of opponent political parties? (Laughter)

In yesterday's Star, Donald MacDonald said we are Trotskyists -- he gives the choicest charges to the press, leaving us with the ones which are not so interesting. Even if we were, what would that mean? Trotskyism, I imagine, is a set of views. There is nothing in the constitution which says you can be expelled for holding a certain set of views. You can only be expelled for supporting another political party. Clearly here the provincial leader has said the expulsions are being carried out because we hold minority views.

Expulsion of people holding minority views is not limited to Ontario. The Labour Party in Britain tried to expel Bertrand Russell, a prominent supporter of unilateral disarmament, for being a sponsor of a world peace conference. They failed in this because of rank-and-file protests. However, when Bertrand Russell was asked by Hugh Gaitskell and George Brown to explain his sponsorship of this congress, Russell didn't answer, he asked that they explain their support for nuclear-testing and their support of Polaris submarines at a time when the Labour Party conference was clearly and unequivocally opposed to them. Bertrand Russell did not answer witch hunt questions either.

To see other expulsions, we can come back to Canada, and British Columbia. Last fall, eleven members of the New Democratic Youth were expelled from the B.C. NDY for more or less the same reasons as we are being expelled in Ontario.

Writing of these expulsions, George Pembleton, in the December, 1962 issue of the Western Pulp & Sulphite Worker, published by the Western Canada Council of the Pulp and Paper Mill Union in B.C., pointed out that the B.C. executive in its letter of expulsion to the eleven, said that it "must consider that you voted against the formal resolution in support of the principles and policies of the New Democratic Party at the recent Youth Convention."

This resolution in fact called for support of

all the principles and all the program of the New Democratic Party. The NDP in British Columbia is opposed to NATO: the federal party supports it. Only a schizophrenic could support all the principles and all the program of the New Democratic Party in British Columbia. (Laughter)

Pembleton in his article goes on to say: "Shades of Adolph Hitler, cannot one vote against a resolution at a convention now? As I have said, I am a member of the NDP and intend to remain one unless kicked out, but I also believe that people within an organization should have the right to dissent from the opinions of the executive or the majority of the members if they so desire.

"Are we to become an ossified organization in which nothing can be changed, no policy can be objected to, no contrary opinions can be voiced because the executive might not like it?

"If so I do not doubt that the organization will soon be dead and very deservedly buried."

That is Mr. Pembleton's position.

In British Columbia there was also the case of Cedric Cox. You may have read around January -- Dick I believe stayed at the same hotel as Cox did in Cuba -- that Mr. Cox, who is a member of the legislative assembly in British Columbia, and a member of the New Democratic Party, of course, visited Cuba as a guest of the Cuban government. When he did this, the leader of the British Columbia section of the NDP, Robert Strachan, suggested to the press that when Cedric Cox returned, he might be expelled. Harold Winch, the NDP member from Vancouver East, in parliament, quite quickly replied: "I don't know what Strachan has in mind, and why he said what he did, but nobody pulls dictatorship in the New Democratic Party." This, said by a member of parliament.

This is what we all have to fight: dictatorship in the New Democratic Party; the expropriation of the power and the authority of the membership by the provincial executive, and the expropriation of the authority of the provincial council by the executive. We have to fight for free discussion in our party. A party cannot grow if there

is no discussion, especially a party which is a mass party, a party which is going to involve many people, hundreds and thousands of people from all parts of the country. It cannot grow unless people feel that it is <u>their</u> party and they will not feel it is their party unless they can express <u>their</u> views in it.

Our party intends to build a more democratic society. I certainly agree and everyone here agrees that we need a more democratic society, and that the New Democratic Party is the party that is going to build it. However, how can anyone have any confidence in the ability of a party to build a more democratic society when it, in its internal affairs, functions in a more dictatorial way than even the Liberals or Conservatives? It is said that charity begins at home; I would say that democracy begins at home, too.

All this applies especially to the youth. A party cannot expect the youth to follow the decisions and the views of the adult members like sheep, and it cannot expect that the youth will simply go around and parrot the ideas of their elders. Youth has to develop its own ideas; it must learn from its own mistakes. Members of the NDY have to look for ideas. They have to look all around, not only in the party that they're in, but in other parties and other political currents, because if you seriously want to be a political person you have to understand not only what your party is saying but what every other political party is saying. By launching this witch hunt the New Democratic Party is in fact creating an atmosphere in which youth will not be able to do this.

If the New Democratic Youth does not go out and look for new ideas and look for its own ideas, members of the New Democratic Youth will have no right to call themselves the future leaders of the New Democratic Party. If its members do not search for new ideas, they will become petty, minor bureaucrats at seventeen years old, which is not becoming future leaders of the New Democratic Party. (Applause)

DICK FIDLER

I almost started out by calling everybody here Fellow New Democrats. While legally speaking, this would be incorrect because we have been expelled from the party, I think it does underline one point -- and that is, that we all support the New Democratic Party. And we lay down no conditions for our support of the party.

We do not say that the leadership has to be this or that, that the leadership has to say this or that, that the party has to have such and such a program. We do not fit the party in a rigid framework and insist that this is what the party should be. Instead we support it unconditionally.

Now on April the 8th an election was held in Canada, the results came out and the New Democratic Party had not done as well as many of us had hoped and expected that it would do. Naturally after a defeat of this nature, particularly considering that it came as the second defeat in a year, it would be expected that members of the NDP would go out and they would hold meetings and they would discuss with each other in a serious manner what went wrong. This is the election that presented great opportunities to us, you know. Here we were the only party which had a principled stand on nuclear weapons. Principled and popular --- a stand supported by at least 40% of the Canadian people, according to the Gallup poll. We also posed, I think, some sort of alternative, although one could argue the merits of our programme as it stands at present -- we posed the real alternative to the old line parties. We had a good organization in most of the ridings, at least in the Toronto area, and our membership had grown considerably in the previous year. We had all sorts of opportunities before us.

Yet we did not do as well as we had hoped. Now, I do not think it is enough to dismiss the whole question and blame our defeat upon the majority government line of the Liberal party, or the

opposition of the press, or things of this nature. These points all have a certain validity, it is true, but I do not think it is the sole reason. Many, many NDP'ers now are wondering just exactly what went wrong and I am sure many of them have very good suggestions and very good ideas of what did go wrong and they have some very good suggestions of what should be done in the future. Already in some ridings, a very few I am afraid, in some ridings across this country people are getting together and they are discussing in a very serious manner.

But what, then, has been the real reaction of the leadership of the Party? This is another question. Their reaction was to expel us. Well, you know, I think that this is part of the general tendency which I have witnessed on the provincial council in the past year, and which I am sure all of us have observed to some degree of the leadership of the NDP and I am speaking here of Donald MacDonald and George Cadbury, I may as well name names, and be completely open and honest about this -- a general tendency to brush aside election defeats of our party and to say we lost because of the Trotskyists, or the Communists who gave us the kiss of death, or the hostile treatment of the press which didn't support us, and all these little points. But very often they concentrate on one particular point.

Well, you know, after this election just past, apparently the brass got together at the Office and they decided that it was the Trotskyists who were to be the scapegoats. After all, very few people have ever heard of Trotskyism, and at any rate, you cannot use the old excuses time after time. So they decided it was going to be the Trotskyists, and that it was going to be a little organization which they called the Young Socialist Alliance, so they got together and said, "Look, who are our enemies in this party -- people whom we don't like and whom we suspect don't really like us too much either", and they said, "Ah ha, there is Allan Engler, there is John Wilson, there is Toni Foster, and other people", and so they typed out little letters to us saying "you are a member

of this Young Socialist Alliance,you cannot belong to our party any more."

Well, you have heard the arguments on this issue. I think it is absolutely obvious that there is no justification for kicking us out of the party. None of us are members of any opponent political organization;we have all worked to the best of our ability in support of the NDP, and I am hoping we all intend to do this in the future.

These expulsions have meant the end of the youth movement in the Metropolitan Toronto area in the official sense. They have dissolved the Metro Youth Council. I hope you all know this. This was done arbitrarily by the leadership of the NDP. That's the way it goes. Sometimes I wonder who are the real wreckers in this movement.

We are people who speak out for our views, and there is nothing, absolutely nothing, shady or sinister about my views, or, I'm sure, of the views of anybody else here.

Now, some of us have often attacked the present program of the party, and we have presented suggestions as to what should be done. At times we have criticized the strategy of the party, made criticisms here and there where we felt they would be useful, and suggested further measures. Is this against the party? Is there anything in our criticisms which have been made, which would classify us as being opposed to their democratic party? You know, I've always felt when I get up at a convention and say something, no matter what it is, that I'm doing this in the feeling that this is going to help the NDP. That I'm presenting ideas which I think the NDP should be adopting, and that I think would be electorally more rewarding. I don't think that any of us have the concept that we are trying to wreck the NDP -- that we are trying to restrict its development -- that we are trying to hold back its growth, its recruitment of members, anything like this. Nothing whatsoever of that nature.

Criticism of the leadership doesn't mean criticism of the party; it means quite the contrary. At most, it merely implies that the leadership --

and they are only mortals, after all -- can make, and have made, mistakes.

Now some people have criticized our behavior at conventions. At the last youth convention, many of those people who have been expelled were active in a left caucus, which formed around the struggle on certain basic issues. There is nothing illegal about caucuses in the NDP --there is absolutely no clause in the constitution of the party which prohibits any sort of caucuses. There are all sorts of caucuses at conventions. I don't know whether you were at the last provincial convention, but you know, there were all sorts of slates operating on the floor, and these slates didn't just appear out of thin air. They were created by caucuses. Why, I have one here which has twenty-five names on it for the various executive positions on the provincial executive of the NDP. This one was circulated at the last provincial convention. And I have here also a list of the people who were elected. Do you know that these correspond with only two exceptions? Two people on this list didn't make it onto this one -- and this is the official list. So it's quite obvious that the brass of the party have their own caucuses, too. And they're not averse to meeting in the backrooms, drawing up their own list of their friends and their henchmen and the boys who voted with them last time at the union convention and so on, and pointing them forth to us. There is really nothing illegal about this. The brass does it itself.

Similarly for the youth. Here's an even better one. At the last provincial convention of the youth held in Hamilton, another caucus slate was circulated. This one's good, it's got one hundred per cent accuracy. (Laughter) This is an official list of the youth executive, and every one of the names corresponds. Pretty good record, you know. I wish our caucuses were that successful. So there is really nothing illegal about forming caucuses or putting forward slates at conventions. Nothing at all.

Now I think the other people have spoken very

well of the nature of this purge which is going on in our ranks -- they termed it a witch hunt. You know how they used to hunt down the witches back in New England, in the old days of Salem, Massatchussets. They used to burn 'em -- but it used to involve more than just catching people and putting them up before a kangaroo court, and burning them. It also meant that you spread a lot of innuendo and a lot of slander, and made charges about people behind their backs. And it involved serious charges. Well, that is what is going on in this party. And it must stop. It is a very unhealthy attitude -- a wrecking attitude, a splitting attitude, and it certainly isn't going to help the NDP. These purges don't really benefit anybody, and they benefit least of all the people who initiate them in the first place. I don't think that these persons are doing the NDP any good. I don't think they're convincing anybody that they'd like to put the government of Ontario in Donald MacDonald's hands. I don't think they show that he's a particularly responsible individual. The whole way in which this expulsion is being carried out is contrary to the essential character of this party. How can we say that the New Democratic Party poses a more effective democracy than that phony "democracy" that we are getting from John Robarts? You know, we've got to convince people that we propose a real alternative, and we don't do it by expelling other people. These witch hunts spread out, as I say, they take in ever-wider elements and I think it is very important that we must all stop these expulsions, and get down to work and really find out what's going wrong in the party, and do our best to change the situation and to go forward to new victories.

Well, now, the question presents itself. We held this meeting so that people could hear our case. We weren't able to get a sufficient hearing in our constituency clubs, but we're hoping that you people will go back to your clubs and do what you can to stop these expulsions. Protest them. Already, this sort of process is taking place, and I think it is a very important that every one of us

goes back to his constituency club, back to his union local, if it's affiliated to the NDP -- you've got to be careful, you know, we don't want the wrong unions protesting on this --(Laughter)-- and if you are on any council, the Metro council, the provincial council, or the federal council, you should raise this question and raise it in a forthright manner. You know, we have nothing to be ashamed of --it's the most basic, elementary rights which are at stake here -- we have nothing to be ashamed of whatsoever. And it is the duty and responsibility of every person who supports us and is a member of the New Democratic Party to raise the question of these expulsions and to protest them -- not only in the nammer in which they have been carried out -- but in the very essence of the expulsions, the very reasons for them. And I think that it's also important that even if you are in a club where no one has been expelled, you should go back and you should protest, and raise the issue there. Don't just leave it to the people who have been expelled. But go back there and raise the issue. Put the heat on, you know, this is the only way you can do it. The only way we can win out in an issue like this is to get the masses of the people aroused, and this is the way to do it.

Now some people have questioned, in a sort of casual manner, even at this meeting -- why do we bother to protest these expulsions in the first place? That is, why, if we have differences with the New Democratic Party leadership, if we think the New Democratic Party has failed, in the last two elections, and that it has not made the impact that it should have, why do we bother to protest these expulsions in the first place? Well, I think I mentioned in my opening remarks that we all support the NDP and we all continue to support it. But we think that it is really necessary that in the coming period, the NDP should pose a clear alternative to the old-line parties. Perhaps we have heard a lot of talk about this, but I think it should really be mentioned again.

This is one of the big problems which we have.

We haven't posed a really fundamental alternative. Fundamental problems, such as the problems of unemployment, the threat of nuclear annihilation, and so on, require fundamental solutions. And this is the question, and this is the perspective which the NDP has, and this is what the NDP should be rising to meet. The party has a great potential. It is not just the old CCF in a union suit, as someone has suggested --it is much more than that. Of course, in a way it <u>is</u> the old CCF in a union suit, and that's a good thing, too. Because it is the labor party in Canada.

But the New Democratic Party has a much greater perspective than the old CCF ever had. It's a mass party -- a mass labor party. We have 150,000 affiliated members in Ontario alone. That's not chicken, you know. That's good stuff, big stuff. It's a mass party, with a really great perspective and potential ahead of it. And that's why we're not walking out of the party. Because it's the only place, the only party for a socialist, for someone who supports the cause of the working class, and who believes that the working class needs a better deal in Canada. This is the only party for them to go to. And that's why we support it.

And the job, then, is to build the membership of the NDP, not to engage in these expulsions and other internecine, mutually destructive activities, but to get out into the clubs and the unions and to build the NDP and to sign up new members. So that only then can it realize its real potential. Only then can it fulfil the potential which is opening before it, if we only take advantage of issues. So I would urge you now to get out and protest the expulsions. In the short run, this is the job. In the long run, we've got to build the NDP. And in the long run, that is the only solution, the only solution, for example, to the whole problem which faces us with the crisis of leadership in the NDP today. As long as the party is a small party, with very little potential, very little perspective, very little support among the Canadian working class, the Canadian electorate,

these people at the top, these crusty old bureaucrats, you know, up in Woodsworth House, will always have a very free hand. Because you know, the smaller the party is -- and it's almost a rule of politics -- that the smaller the party is, the stronger the brass gets. You know, when you build the party, when you inject new life into it, and new members, and you really build up the membership, these people have to take account of what the membership is thinking. You're introducing a whole new ferment into the party. You're introducing new ideas as well as new members, and I think you really introduce a whole new perspective to it. So that's our job -- get out and protest the expulsions, and build the party, because that is the solution which lies ahead of us in Canada. (Applause)

STAN DAVIES

At the conclusion of the meeting, a member of the audience, Stan Davies, asked to say a few words. His remarks, in many respects the climax of the evening, constituted a convincing endorsement of the speakers' statements. Davies had been the secretary of the CCF youth and of the New Democratic Youth, 1961-62. While he had at one time supported the expulsion of those holding left-wing views, Davies now declared himself opposed to purges. He spoke of the petty gossip and slander which the brass of the party spreads against their critics within the NDP and NDY. They used these tactics, he said, because they feared to engage in a principled discussion -- "after all, they know they would be defeated in the realm of political ideas... They have a psychological fear of left-wingers, characterizing the expelled youth ('Trotskyites') as 'people who wear baggy sweaters and play banjoes'". Their attitude toward the working class, Davies stated, could be summarized by Orwell's definition: "It smells". He agreed with the other speakers that the expulsion should be fought, and the youth reinstated.

10 NDP Members 'Purged'

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5 YOUTHS SAY 'Expelled By NDP McCarthy Style'

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10 NDP Expelled, Appeal To Public

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Fight NDP 'Crusties'

Expelled members of the New Democratic Youth group want the heat put on the "crusty old bureaucrats" that

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NDP. Secretary - John Wilson 1167 Dundas St. W., Tor